

NINTENDO PROS

Evaluations of games at Nintendo aren't limited to the reactions of consumers. Another important means of judging games is to have teams of pro game players make evaluations. Two groups of evaluators review and evaluate every game that arrives at Nintendo HQ. In addition to these two groups, a team of Game Analysts plays Nintendo and licensee games still in development. The comments of the Analysts help programmers focus on possible trouble areas in a game. They also suggest ways to improve games in areas like game control, graphics, and depth of play.

In-house evaluations are used by many departments at Nintendo, but the most familiar use is the Power Meters printed here in Nintendo Power. The Power Meter averages the evaluation scores of the two evaluation groups in eight categories, which are then combined into the four categories of the Power Meter. Since each of these pros has played hundreds of games, their ratings are comparative, or based on their knowledge of how good and poor games can be. They also take into account the norm for different categories of games. For instance, a game like chess won't suffer in its ratings from having simple graphics as long as those graphics are easily understood. The evaluators must also keep in mind what is expected from different types of games and game elements. In a racing game, for example, players expect to start slow and build up speed, like in a real car. Blasting off the starting mark at 300mph would not generally be viewed as a plus by game testers.

Although a Power Meter may rate a game as high or low, it isn't the final word. Remember that the Power Meter number you see is only an average. Some of the evaluators may have rated a game quite highly while others rated it as mediocre. Also, a high rating in a particular category may be more significant for certain types of games. An RPG should have a high rating in the Challenge and Theme & Fun categories. For this type of game, Graphics and Control are secondary factors. As you begin to make your own evaluations, keep in mind that everyone looks at games in different ways. Your Personal Power Meter is just one of many possible results.

HOW A POWER METER IS BORN

The eight category scores below for Super Mario World were combined and averaged to create the four Power Meter ratings.

- | | | |
|---|---------|------|
| 1. Graphics | 4.85 | G4.7 |
| 2. Sound | 4.55 | |
| 3. Initial Feel | 4.4 | P4.6 |
| 4. Play Control | 4.8 | |
| 5. Concept/Story | 4.3 | T |
| 6. Excitement/Thrill | 4.4-4.4 | |
| 7. Lasting Interest & Challenge | 4.4 | C4.5 |
| 8. Overall | 4.6 | |

FORM YOUR OWN EVALUATIONS

Use the form on the next page to evaluate games yourself. Make as many copies of the form as you need for your files. Fill out the top of the form with the correct information so you can keep track of what games you have evaluated. When you play the game, be thinking of the following categories:

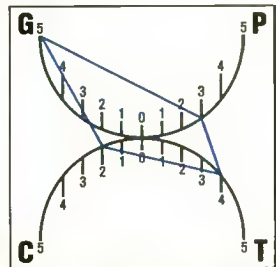
Graphics & Sound—The graphics of a game should add to the game experience. Be sure to notice the background as well and the character animation. Sound includes the background music as well as the sound effects. Do the sounds fit the feel of the game?

Play Control—The play control of a game should be smooth and easy to control. The character should jump when you want him to. This can also include the placement of the buttons. Are the run and jump buttons where they should be?

Challenge—The challenge of a game should fit the level of the player. A good game should challenge game players as well as keep them interested.

Theme & Fun—Does the game have an original theme to it, or is it the same as all your other games? How much fun did you have when you played the game?

After you have played the game, place your scores on the chart in the center of the form. Connect the four scores to make your own power meter of the game.

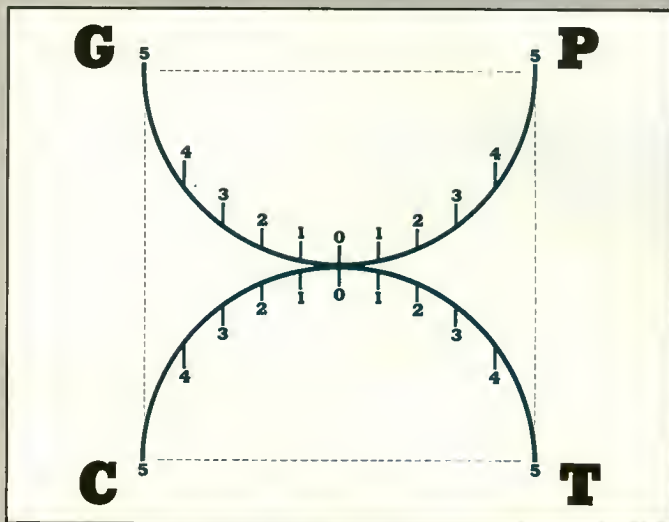


This Power Meter is an example of a game with great graphics, fair play control, little challenge, but is still fun to play

NINTENDO POWER P LAYER'S EVALUATION FORM

**SUPER
POWER
CLUB**

NAME OF GAME	
SYSTEM	COMPANY
GAME TYPE	EVALUATOR
DATE	ISSUE REVIEWED IN NINTENDO POWER



EVALUATION	POWER PLAYER	POWER METER	Evaluator's Comments
G = Graphics & Sound			
P = Play Control			
C = Challenge			
T = Theme & Fun			